



## JOHNSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

dedicated to the prevention of disease and promotion of wellness for our community.

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### RABID BAT FOUND IN JOHNSON COUNTY

(OLATHE, KS – **SEPTEMBER 2, 2008**) There has been one confirmed rabid bat reported to the Johnson County Health Department.

Exposure to bats is often difficult to determine. If bats are found in your home, especially in areas where individuals are sleeping (in particular, children, elderly or those unable to communicate) you should contact local animal control officers or professional pest control companies to remove the bats and have them submitted for rabies testing. You should also talk to your doctor about possibly receiving post-exposure vaccines.

“You should never wait until symptoms start. By the time symptoms develop, it is too late for treatment and rabies is a fatal illness” states Dr. Leon Vinci, Johnson County Health Department Health Director. “There are currently no tests available to diagnose rabies in people prior to the onset of symptoms.”

Keeping bats out of your home is easy by following a few simple steps.

- Do not leave unscreened doors or windows open to the outside. Make sure all doors that open to the outside close tightly.
- Make sure doors and windows are screened, chimneys are capped, and electrical and plumbing openings in the structure are plugged.
- Seal openings larger than ¼ inch by ½ inch square that would allow access into the attic, basement, walls, or living areas of a structure.
- Utilize materials to seal or cover gaps and holes including spray-on expanding foam, wire mesh, netting, caulk, or tight-fitting wood. Steel wool or caulking can be utilized around pipes that enter buildings.

Use extreme caution when dealing with all animals, especially unfamiliar ones, to reduce the risk of being bitten.

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